

Message Text

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17

ACTION AF-06

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DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SAM-01

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P 200900Z JUN 75

FM AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

TO AMEMBASSY LISBON PRIORITY

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3605

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE LOURENCO MARQUES 660

FOR CHARGE FROM CONSUL GENERAL

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PO

SUBJECT: ADMIRAL CRESPO

REF: LISBON 3380

1. ON THE BASIS OF SOME 10 MEETINGS WITH ADMIRAL CRESPO, MOST OF THEM ONE ON ONE DISCUSSIONS, AND WATCHING HIS PUBLIC PERFORMANCES HERE AND HIS HANDLING OF THE DIFFICULT SITUATION DURING THE SEPTEMBER ATTEMPTED UPRISING AND THE OCTOBER 21 RACIAL VIOLENCE, I HAVE THE FOLLOWING OBSERVATIONS.

2. ADMIRAL CRESPO DOES NOT STRIKE ME AS A DECISIVE OR AGGRESSIVE MAN, THOUGH HE APPEARS TO BE DETERMINED. HIS PUBLIC APPEARANCES HAVE BEEN UNIFORMLY UNIMPRESSIVE AND IN PRIVATE DISCUSSIONS HE HESITATES AND IS SOMETIMES ILL AT EASE. I WAS FRANKLY SURPRISED AT THIS APPARENT SUCCESS IN HAVING HIMSELF AND POSSIBLY THE OTHERS ADDED TO THE REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL UPON HIS RETURN TO LISBON FOLLOWING MARCH 11. CERTAINLY HIS RAPID RETURN AND RESISTANCE ON EXCLUSION FROM THE RC SHOWS DETERMINATION MENTIONED ABOVE.

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3. REPLYING SPECIFICALLY TO YOUR QUESTIONS IN PARA 3, REFTEL:

(A) AS HIGH COMMISSIONER HE HAS BEEN QUITE EFFECTIVE IN ESTABLISHING GOOD RELATIONS WITH FRELIMO IN VERY DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES AND IN CASES WHERE THERE COULD HAVE BEEN CONSIDERABLE STRAIN BETWEEN THE TWO. HE WAS ALSO EFFECTIVE AFTER THE SEPTEMBER 7-11 UPRISING IN COORDINATING JOINT MILITARY PATROLS BY PORTUGUESE AND FRELIMO TROOPS, ALTHOUGH THIS MAY BE PARTLY DUE TO HIS CHIEF OF STAFF, COLONEL MENESES. HE SEEMS TO HAVE MADE A SERIOUS ERROR OF JUDGEMENT IN ALLOWING THE COMMANDOS TO REMAIN IN MOZAMBIQUE UNTIL OCTOBER 21 WHEN SOME OF THEM ATTACKED FRELIMO SOLDIERS, CAUSING THE OUTBURST OF RACIAL VIOLENCE. LOURENCO MARQUES WAS FULL OF REPORTS REGARDING THE COMMANDOS' INTENTIONS FOR AT LEAST 48 HOURS PRIOR TO THE INCIDENTS.

(B) HE HAS BEEN SOMEWHAT RESERVED WITH ME BUT FROM WHAT HE HAS SAID AND FROM WHAT I HAVE HEARD, I WOULD SAY HIS POLITICAL ORIENTATION IS LEFTIST (SOCIALIST, POPULIST, IDEALIST) BUT NOT MARXIST. LIKE MANY OFFICERS IN THE MFA HE PROBABLY HAD NOT GIVEN MUCH THOUGHT TO POLITICS PRIOR TO 1974.

(C) HE ONCE TOLD ME THAT MELO ANTUNES AND VITOR ALVES WERE AMONG HIS CLOSEST PERSONAL FRIENDS IN THE MFA LEADERSHIP.

(D) HE HAS REFUSED TO BE DRAWN OUT BY ME ON PORTUGAL'S POLITICAL SITUATION.

(E) HIS ATTITUDE TOWARD THE U.S. SEEMS TO BE MODERATELY FRIENDLY ON PERSONAL LEVEL BUT QUITE SUSPICIOUS OF U.S. INTERFERENCE IN PORTUGUESE INTERNAL AFFAIRS. MOREOVER, HE ONCE EXPRESSED TO ME EXTREME CONCERN OVER "FOREIGN INTERFERENCE" IN ANGOLA, WHICH I TOOK TO MEAN U.S., ESPECIALLY THROUGH ZAIRE. RE EUROPE, I AM CONVINCED THAT HE IS STRONGLY IN THE CAMP WHICH BELIEVES THAT PORTUGAL IS A THIRD WORLD COUNTRY AND HE IDENTIFIES WITH AFRICA PERHAPS EVEN MORE THAN WITH EUROPE.

(F) WHILE HE HAS NEVER SAID AS MUCH, I HAVE THE STRONG FEELING THAT HE BELIEVES THAT THE AFM SHOULD RUN THE SHOW IN PORTUGAL, THOUGH I HAVE NO IDEA HOW HE FEELS ABOUT THE POLITICAL PARTIES.

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KG) HIS PERSONAL AIDE TOLD ME HE INTENDS TO RETURN TO PORTUGAL ON JUNE 27 AND DEVOTE IMMEDIATE ATTENTION TO HIS ROLE IN THE RREVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL. I HAVE HEARD NOTHING ON HIS POSSIBLE FUTURE JOBS AND HE MAY WELL PLAN TO SPEND FULL TIME IN RC ROLE.

4. IN SHORT, I SEE HIM AS A "SWING MAN" IN A VOTE BUT NOT AS A LEADER.

WALKER

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